

Are Cigarettes a Menace? 2 Views

'Protect Children,' Doctor Asks

"It's no longer an opinion that some lung cancers are caused by cigarette smoking. . . It's a fact."

So says Dr. Michael B. Shimkin, chief of the biometry branch of the National Cancer Institute of the U.S. Public Health Service in Bethesda, Md.

Today's problem, he feels, is "what to do about it."

Cigarette smoking "is a habit that involves over 70 per cent of all males and has been with western civilization for 300 years. . . It is a major industry in our country with obvious economic ramifications," Dr. Shimkin said.

DR. SHIMKIN had strong words about the tobacco industry and charged that its advertising attempts to make cigarette smoking "the thing to do."

"The emphasis is on a group that should be protected—children," he said. "We know from experience that the tissues of youngsters are even more susceptible than adults."

He was critical of advertising which has connotations that "you smoke with pleasure, for social acceptance and as a sign of manliness."

He called for "self-discipline by the industry" and protection of children through refusal to sell cigarettes to them. This, he noted, is impossible with the use of vending machines.

"This is surely a social responsibility and problem," Dr. Shimkin said. "We must recognize the problem and have careful community thinking."

Dr. Shimkin is a non-smoker today. He said he smoked two packages a day "until the statistics became too prominent."

DR. SHIMKIN also observed:

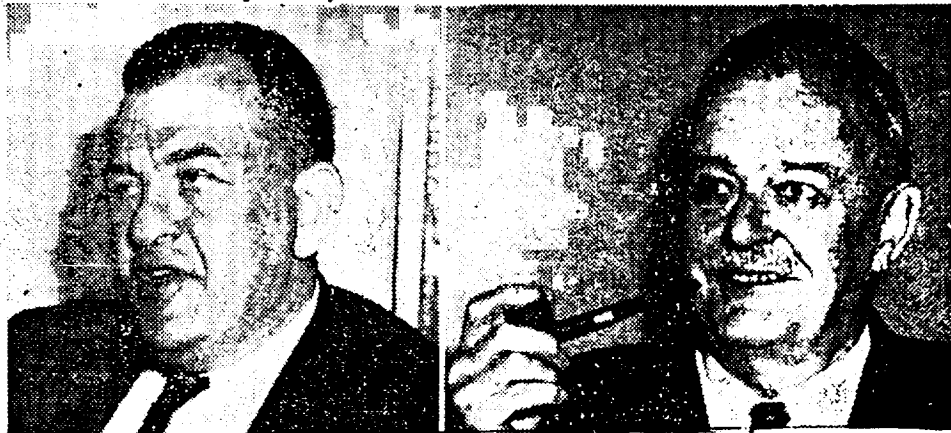
"This is not to say all lung cancer is due to cigarettes. But cigarettes are the single, most important factor because they are constantly and commonly used and they are so deeply inhaled."

By DON FRADENBURGH

Fuel was added to the long-smoldering cigarette-smoking feud today at the Chamber of Commerce. The Monroe County Cancer Assn. heard a doctor from the National Cancer Institute attack the tobacco industry for its "extraordinary lack of social consciousness and responsibility—healthwise—to the public."

And they heard a tobacco industry scientist claim that "the continued selection and presentation of only evidence which supports the tobacco-guilt theory is neither scientific nor honest."

Here are reports of their talks.



DR. MICHAEL SHIMKIN

DR. CLARENCE LITTLE

Cigarettes, according to Dr. Shimkin, are so constructed that their smoke is easily inhaled. Pipe tobacco and cigars differ and their smoke is not so easily inhaled.

He feels that if the tobacco industry produced a "more irritating" cigarette it might be a step forward because then people would not inhale so much.

Dr. Shimkin is a firm believer in advice offered by the U.S. surgeon general: That is, if you are a cigarette smoker, try to cut down; but better yet, switch to a pipe or cigar.

Scientist Hits 'Fear Campaign'

A "fear campaign" directed towards cigarette smokers was assailed today by Clarence Cook Little, D. Sc., scientific director of the Tobacco Industry Research Committee.

Dr. Little says he is "anxious for research work to continue" and said the question of tobacco and lung cancer should be "kept open instead of shutting it off at the present time."

"Many of us believe that the problems of lung cancer causation are not solved and we believe medical research will be rendered a disservice

if the case is considered decided or closed," he continued.

He claimed that there are "many inconsistencies between the actual findings and the type of interpretation of statistical result reported by various workers" in the case against tobacco.

DR. LITTLE, who smokes a pipe and occasionally lights up a cigarette, questioned the value of some statistics.

"There are unexplained differences in cigarette smoking-lung cancer calculations as one goes from country to country, from region to region, or from city to city in any given country where such data have been collected," he said.

"For instance, people in the United States, who smoke 30 per cent more cigarettes per capita than the British, have a lung cancer death rate less than half that of England and Wales.

"The American lung cancer death rate is about the same as that in Denmark in Switzerland, where per capita cigarette smoking is about one-half that in the United States."

Dr. Little said that of the "heaviest smokers of 40 or 50 years' experience—people who are now in their 80s—less than 10 per cent have lung cancer. Why don't the other 90 per cent? The type of person involved is the determining factor."

DR. LITTLE conceded that he is not anxious to see youngsters smoke.

But, he added, "I am not anxious to see them drink or fill up with soft drinks."

"I don't think excessive habits are good for youngsters and I don't think they are good for adults. This applies to everything—drinking, driving too fast, having too much coffee.

"I don't think any habit should be condemned because some abuse it," he added.

DR. LITTLE also said: "I believe that there is reason to advocate and to continue to practice sound unbiased scientific judgment in evaluating the role, if any, that cigarette-smoking plays.

"In most situations of this sort one is apt to find that differences in the host organism are a major, if not the chief, factor in determining the response to the challenge.

"There is great need to organize and carry out studies in this field in relation to the present problem of tobacco use.

"During the time that will be needed to establish a sound longitudinal clinical study of sufficient magnitude to establish definitions and data to allow a really scientific . . . analysis, it is hoped that experimental work on the problem will increase greatly both in extent and in depth."

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